

ATTITUDES, PERCEPTIONS, EVALUATIONS AND POLICIES OF BUYING IN RELATION TO CHILD WORK

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Abstract

Little research has been conducted on the opinions of young people living in industrialized countries about child work, which is a still widespread phenomenon in many countries. Child work is a component of many productive activities that have their final step in the distribution of products in western countries, therefore the awareness of this phenomenon, of its diffusion and of its outcomes can represent a relevant factor in the formation of attitudes and buying behaviors among the marketing target of these products. This research relates to attitudes, perceptions, evaluations of young Italians, aged 14-27, in relation to child work, as well as to the consequent adoption of preventative buying policies.

The research was conducted through the use of a questionnaire, administrated to a sample of about 1,600 students.

The questionnaire measured the variables of general knowledge about child work, causal attributions regarding this phenomenon, perceived efficacy of preventing measures meant to reduce it, attitudes toward child work and attitudes toward the adoption of polices of buying related to child work. These dimensions were assessed through a series of different type of scales. The findings of this research give a series of instruments for understanding the levels of awareness and the critical factors of diffusion of the information about this phenomenon. Specifically, mass media play a crucial role on the representation of child work, negative attitudes towards child work are closely associated to mental representation of poverty and exploitation, but more positive attitude if work is perceived as pleasant and freely chosen by the child.

Much can be done with the findings of this research in order to raise the awareness about the diffusion and the relevance of child work, as well as in order to stimulate actions related to it. In this perspective, this study can be also a starting point for further research about more dimensions related to child work and about modifications of the awareness and the representations about it.

Keywords: materialism, morality, utilitarianism, ethics, socially responsible business